

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL – NOVEMBER 28, 2005

Mayor Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:35 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Blair, Clouette, Haddad, Hawkins, Koehn, Paterson, Paulhus, Redding (arrived at 7:38 p.m.), Schaefer

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Schaefer moved and Hawkins seconded to approve the minutes of November 14, 2005 with corrections.

Motion so passed. Blair abstained.

Hawkins moved and Schaefer seconded to approve the minutes of November 21, 2005 as presented.

Motion so passed. Haddad abstained.

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Paterson requested a moment of silence for our troops serving and for those people still suffering the weather affects of the various hurricanes.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

None

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Charter Review Commission

Town Attorney, Dennis O'Brien spoke regarding his experience with charter revision and distributed to the Town Council an outline of charter revision procedures, based on state statutes, which he put together to clarify the process.

There was discussion on the procedures involved, including time restraints, appointment of charter revision members and options available.

A 4- member ad hoc committee was appointed, comprised of Council Members Clouette, Haddad, Hawkins and Koehn. The purpose of the committee is to bring a recommendation to the Town Council on the size of the commission, membership of the commission, timeline for a draft report to be submitted to the Town Council and to identify areas of the charter to be looked at.

Consideration will be given to include the public in the charter revision process.

2. Campus Community Relations

Matt Hart, Assistant Town Manager, gave report on committee progress. Mansfield Community-Campus Partnership has issued mission statement and goals. The Governor's Prevention Partnership, which specializes in substance abuse and in assisting university communities with these issues, will be lending us the services of a facilitator.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

3. Update re: Emergency Services Operations and Management Improvement Project

Fire Chief, David Dagon gave update on project. Town Council created ordinance to establish the Town of Mansfield Division of Fire & Emergency Services last April. The Fire Chief position was part of the ordinance and Dagon was appointed to that position, effective 7/1/05.

Fire Protection Agreements have been renewed, adding a second amendment to continue agreement for 1 year or until consolidation takes place.

Transition work sessions have taken place, which included Professor Donahue, Chief Dagon, 2 fire chiefs and 2 presidents of volunteer associations. The purpose of these sessions was to identify clearly the transition plan and to give opportunities for feedback. Chiefs and presidents continued during the summer to work on plan, which was presented in August to management team and volunteer organizations. Departmental votes took place, formalizing their involvement and interest in moving forward with consolidation. Both votes were unanimous to proceed with plan.

A new volunteer association was established, "Team Fire Association" which stands for "together Eagleville and Mansfield". Interim officers were appointed and a single number designation was decided on - #7. The town has provided the services of an attorney to guide association in incorporating and receiving non-profit status.

In January of 2005, a new contract was implemented for career firefighters. Cross training of all career firefighters between stations took place on all apparatus and equipment. Single work schedules were established in July. Vacancies in the schedule were filled by part time firefighters.

Rank structure is being established. Interim officers will be appointed and an appointment process has been established to fill regular positions. Work incentives will be created to reward volunteers.

3. Draft Plan of Conservation and Development

Town Planner, Greg Padick presented the last Planning & Zoning action on Plan of Conservation update, which action endorsed, with an addendum, the 8/15/05 draft plan. This draft incorporates many of the changes from the earlier May draft, but it is essentially the same plan with refinements.

One of the more significant changes is in the southern part of town, the Pleasant Valley Rd area, where the zoning classification was changed from a planned industrial classification to a combination agriculture/open space/medium-high density residential.

Many changes were made to update the plan with respect to the UConn water system. There were a number of changes that were tied to clarifying existing structure and the fact that this plan recommends higher densities in many areas. The UConn and Windham systems are dependent on a long-term solution to have an adequate water supply and adequate sewerage disposal.

By state statute, the Town Council has a 45-day period to review this information and pass back comments and/or recommendations to Planning & Zoning. If the Council rejects portions of the plan, it will take a 2/3 vote of Planning & Zoning to approve those portions.

Opportunities for the public to receive information and have input into the matter were discussed.

4. CCM Amicus Curiae – CL&P Appeal of DPUC Decision in Streetlight Proceeding

Haddad moved and Hawkins seconded that effective 11/28/05 to appropriate \$500 to assist the CCM with this Amicus Curiae intervention and CL&P's appeal of the DEP's decision in street lighting.

So passed unanimously.

5. Highway Safety Grant – Speed Radar Display Sign

Hawkins moved and Koehn seconded that effective 11/28/05 to authorize the town manager to submit an application to the CT Dept of Transportation to receive a highway grant in the amount of \$4500.

So passed unanimously.

6. December 26, 2005 Regular Town Council Meeting

Paulhus moved and Clouette seconded that effective 11/28/05 to cancel the 12/26/05 regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council.

So passed unanimously.

7. Municipal Retirement System (MERS) Pension Deficit Funding

Town Manager, Martin Berliner reported that the purpose of putting this bonding question on last November's ballot was to save the town approximately \$600,000. Unfortunately we did not get enough voters, but feel it is incumbent on us to try to save the money. The proposal is to appropriate the money from excess revenue that has been received rather than other options which include paying 8.5 % for 30 years, 5.25% for 15 years, bonding it in the future

(depending on rates) or paying cash.

Finance Director, Jeffrey Smith spoke about various options including borrowing the money from ourselves and paying back \$50,000 a year for 10 years or so. He feels that it makes sense to do it next year, depending on interest rates. If not used in this manner, these excess funds would be put into reserves.

Koehn stated that she does not feel comfortable using the funds for this purpose due to the fact that the bonding did not pass at the election. She feels that some of this money could be put to institute a conservation program to save energy instead. Redding stated that she does not feel voters would be opposed to saving money and that it is incumbent on us to think of other ways to save this money.

Schaefer moved and Hawkins seconded to pass the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Section 406.C of the Town Charter the Town Council of the Town of Mansfield hereby approves an appropriation of \$512,000 for the funding of all or any portion, as to be determined by the town manager and the director of finance, of the unfounded actuarial accrued liability with respect to the participation of the town's firefighter and EMT employees in the Connecticut Municipal Employees' Retirement Fund B, as determined in accordance with the provisions of Section 7-441 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended, including any interest accrued thereon; and for costs related to the payment of such MERS Un-funded Past Benefit Obligation. Said appropriation shall be funded in the following amounts from the following General Fund revenues unanticipated in the current fiscal year budget:

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unanticipated Revenue Source</u>
\$300,000	Payments in lieu of taxes ("PILOT")
\$ 72,000	ECS Grant
\$140,000	Interest Income

The town anticipates that the General Fund will be reimbursed for expenditures pursuant to the aforesaid appropriation from the proceeds of borrowings, if such borrowings are subsequently authorized. The town manager, the director of finance and other proper officers and officials of the town are authorized to take all other action which is necessary or desirable to enable the town to effectuate the payment of such MERS Unfunded Past Benefit Obligation.

Blair, Haddad, Hawkins, Paterson, Paulhus, Redding & Schaefer voted in favor of the motion. Clouette & Koehn voted against the motion.

The motion was passed.

9. Financial Statements Dated September 30, 2005

Schaefer moved and Paulhus seconded that effective 11/28/05 to refer the Financial Statements dated 9/30/05 to the Finance Committee for review.

So passed unanimously.

VII. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

- None

VIII. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- None

- IX. REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Clouette went to the UConn Board of Trustees meeting and conveyed message to the trustees for hopes for continued cooperation.

On October 27th Hawkins attended the Public Safety Committee for the CT Conference Of Municipalities.

Koehn attended program on emergency services for persons with disabilities last Saturday.

Paterson will be attending the National League Of Cities Conference next week and at the conference will serve as an officer on the University Community Caucus national group and also on the Policy Committee for Human Services and will be representing the State of Connecticut on the Resolutions Committee for the National League.

X. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Berliner announced that he has appointed Mary Stanton as Town Clerk for the Town of Mansfield and she will begin work on 12/12/05.

Resident Trooper First Class Scott Crevier and Mansfield Police Officer, William Clayton are being awarded a departmental award with the State Police and will be recognized at the next Council meeting for their outstanding work in helping to clear up 14 nighttime residential burglaries.

Paterson, Berliner and Gordon Schimmel attended first annual meeting of the Connecticut Coalition For Justice In Education Funding in Hartford on 22nd, followed by a press conference to announce lawsuit. They are members of this group and will be actively attending membership meetings.

Windham Region is sponsoring an energy assistance meeting on the 30th to look at sources of funding for fuel assistance. Kevin Grunwald, Social Services Director will be representing the Town. There was an article in the newspaper asking for additional funds for our Special Needs Fund and several thousand dollars were received, based on that article. Hopefully between that and what's available through other agencies, we will be able to make it through the winter. If not, we may have to come back to the Council to ask for additional funds.

Next meeting of the Downtown Partnership will be December 6th at 4:00 p.m.

XI. FUTURE AGENDAS

Fenton River

Strategic Plan – staff committee meeting will be held this week and update will follow.

Blair reported that CATS Northeast has submitted a proposed ordinance for consideration by Council regarding cat population.

Koehn would like to add energy conservation for future consideration.

XII. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:10 Paulhus moved and Blair seconded to adjourn the meeting.

So passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor
Clerk

Sharon Tyler, Asst Town